



KŪKULU KE EA A KANALOA

## KAHO‘OLawe ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION

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# Press Release

**Date: February 11, 2014**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### KIRC Proposes Solution to Dissipating Trust Fund for State Approval

Nearly halfway through this year’s legislative session, the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) urges community members to trumpet their support for the continued restoration of Kaho‘olawe.

A critical component of the KIRC’s 3-part legislative package proposes a portion of the state’s conveyance tax revenue to replenish the Kaho‘olawe Rehabilitation Trust Fund for the long-term rehabilitation and maintenance of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve: Senate Bill 2743 and House Bill 2101.

Currently, long-term rehabilitation and maintenance plans of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve is financed through grant awards and the Kaho‘olawe Rehabilitation Trust Fund - a percentage of the 1993 U.S. Navy cleanup budget that is anticipated to be exhausted by the end of FY2016. This Trust Fund was not established, nor was the principle ever substantial enough, to be a sustainable endowment where the KIRC could operate solely from its interest; the KIRC has received no State assistance since its 1993 inception, nor the Navy’s 2003 transfer of control-of-access to the State of Hawai‘i, despite the federally mandated report citing "in the short term, Federal funds will provide the bulk of the program support for specific soil conservation projects and related activities. In the longer term, however, State revenues will be needed to continue and enhance those activities initiated with federal funds." The proposed solution reassumes this task as a State responsibility through the conveyance tax; a progressive deed transfer tax applied to all transfers of real property whose balance is then transferred into the State’s general fund. Current recipients of conveyance tax funding include the Natural Area Reserves, Legacy Lands and Affordable Housing.

To date, Senate Bill SB2743 has been heard by the Senate committees on 1) Water and Land and 2) Hawaiian Affairs, passing both committees. House Bill HB2101 was heard and passed by House Committees on 1) Water and Land and 2) Ocean, Marine Resources & Hawaiian Affairs. **The next stop, and the most crucial**, is the hearings with the committees responsible for funding all the bills: 1) the Ways and Means Committee in the Senate and 2) the Finance Committee in the House. The supportive voice of the Hawai‘i community either via online testimony or in-person at these upcoming hearings will seal the fate of these bills.

“The restoration of Kaho‘olawe is a long-term endeavor that will last many generations,” says KIRC Executive Director Mike Nāho‘opi‘i, “to many, Kaho‘olawe is a symbol of resilience, hope for the future of the Hawaiian Nation, and an opportunity to rebuild a cultural heritage. We are only able to do this work through the support of the Trust Fund and through the many hearts & hands that have generously helped to plant seeds for future generations. If Hawai‘i wishes this work to continue, the people have to

say so. And now is the time for their voices to be heard. We must have a sustainable State fund to support the restoration of Kahoʻolawe.”

“The relentless drive to build more investment-oriented real estate developments in scenic places has for many years resulted in, and continues to result in, the systematic destruction or degradation of religiously and culturally significant places in Hawai‘i,” remarks Linda Hamilton Krieger, Professor of Law at UH Hawaii’s William S. Richardson School of Law, “Players in the speculative real estate market benefit tremendously from the presence of Hawai‘i’s natural area reserves, but non-resident players in these markets, because they pay no state income tax, do not contribute to their preservation or restoration. It is altogether fitting that tax policy be used to address the fiscal, environmental, and cultural costs that speculative real estate investment activities have for long externalized onto Hawaii’s land and people.”

**How to take action on SB2743 and HB2101:** Register with the Hawaii Legislature website at <http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/login/register.aspx>. This will allow you to submit testimony and to receive hearing notice notifications by e-mail (generally, we are only given 72-hours notice that our bill has been scheduled for its next hearing, so receiving these timely notifications is important). Visit <http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/> and enter the KIRC bills (SB2743 & HB2101) into the "Bill Status/Measure Status" box, then click "GO".

The KIRC alerts its online community with timely notifications and updates on the legislative process via the following media. Pick the one that works best for you, and pass it on!

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KircMaui>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/KIRCMAUI>
- KIRC website at <http://kahoolawe.hawaii.gov/leg-updates.shtml>
- KIRC Blog: <http://kircblog.blogspot.com/>
- KIRC e-newsletter (through Constant Contact): <http://bit.ly/1bJEEL3>

### **About the KIRC**

Decimated of its natural environment through years of over foraging and military bombing, an estimated 1.9 million tons of soil is lost annually on Kahoʻolawe to erosion. Severely eroded landscapes cover one-third of the island, with runoff choking the Reserve’s pristine reefs and significantly impacting the ocean ecosystem. The Reserve’s inventory of 3,000 historic sites and features – all part of the National Register of Historic Places – are in constant need of protection from these damaging circumstances. Despite an extensive, 10-year cleanup by the Navy, unexploded ordnance litter one-third of the island plus all surrounding waters, leaving areas off-limits and life-threatening.

The Kahoʻolawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) was established by the Hawai‘i State Legislature in 1993 to manage the Kahoʻolawe Island Reserve while it is held in trust for a future Native Hawaiian sovereign entity. The mission of the Kahoʻolawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) is to implement the vision for Kahoʻolawe Island in which the kino (body) of Kahoʻolawe is restored and na poe o Hawai‘i (the people of Hawaii) care for to land. The Commission has pledged to provide for the meaningful and safe use of Kahoʻolawe for the purpose of the traditional and cultural practices of the native Hawaiian people and to undertake the restoration of the island and its waters. The organization is managed by a seven-member Commission and a committed staff. For more information, call (808) 243.5020 or visit [www.kahoolawe.hawaii.gov](http://www.kahoolawe.hawaii.gov).

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